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New computer art mirrors viewer's mood

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5 August, 2006

THE ARTICLE

New computer art mirrors viewer's mood

Researchers in America and England have developed software that scans the feelings on peoples' faces and then produces a piece of computer-generated artwork. The technology is still very new. It analyses eight basic expressions, including the position and shape of the mouth, the openness of the eyes and the angle of the eyes. This information is picked up by a web cam, which uses data from the person's face to guess how the viewer is feeling. The program automatically chooses colors and types of brush strokes each time the person's expression changes and paints a new picture of his or her mood. Lead researcher Dr. John Collomosse said the technology "does all of this in real time, meaning that as the viewer's emotions change the artwork [also changes]".

Collomosse said: "Once you have the programme and have [adjusted] it for the individual viewer, you are ready to start recreating personalized art based on your mood." The project is part of ongoing research to develop different artwork tools for use in the computer graphics industry. It may also have uses in other fields. Analysts could use the software to find out more about the psychological state of patients. A trained doctor could look at the images and then give a patient advice on how to lead a happier life or be more confident. The program may also provide a little more color to our dreary everyday lives - by placing uplifting artwork in front of us wherever we go. No more gray faces on the daily train to the office.

WARM-UPS

1. MY COMPUTER: With your partner(s), talk about how important your computer is to you. How does it help you in your life? What other things would you like it to do? When you have finished, find a new partner and report on what you talked about.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

Researchers / software / artwork / eyes / mouth shapes / emotions / brush strokes / moods / computer graphics / doctors / everyday life / trains / offices

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

3. MOOD ART: Imagine your computer can read your feelings and paint a picture that mirrors your mood. With your partner(s), describe the kind of artwork that might be displayed on your computer in these situations. Change partner(s) and share what you talked about.

- You passed all your exams
- You think a burglar is in your house
- You have a terrible headache
- You are head over heels in love
- You can't connect to the Internet
- A giant spider walks across your desk
- George W. Bush just quit his job
- Other _____

4. QUICK DEBATE: Students A believe computers are our friends and can help us be happy. Students B believe computers are just machines that add to our stress. Debate this with your partners. Change partners often.

5. HEADLINES: With your partner(s), talk about the following imaginary newspaper headlines. What do you think of them? Is it possible they might come true one day? Change partners and share your findings.

- a. Man marries his computer
- b. World's first computer-for-brain transplant a success
- c. Computer becomes president of USA
- d. Computers banned by high schools
- e. Humans ask computers for better working conditions
- f. Europe's computers disabled by magnet bombs
- g. It's here – World's first one-dollar computer
- h. Every person in world now online, says UN's Computers-For-All boss

6. ART: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with art. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. A new computer program can paint moody pictures on mirrors. | T / F |
| b. The program recognizes eight basic facial expressions. | T / F |
| c. The program chooses the brush stroke based on the person's mood. | T / F |
| d. It takes several hours for the computer to create the artwork. | T / F |
| e. The program must be adjusted for each individual viewer. | T / F |
| f. The program may have uses in psychology and other fields. | T / F |
| g. The program may add more color to our everyday lives. | T / F |
| h. The artwork will mean there'll be more bored-looking commuters. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| a. scans | head |
| b. angle | heartwarming |
| c. picked up | feelings |
| d. lead | areas |
| e. emotions | slant |
| f. adjusted | continuing |
| g. ongoing | detected |
| h. fields | dull |
| i. dreary | examines |
| j. uplifting | changed |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| a. software that scans | in real time |
| b. It analyses eight basic | guess how the viewer is feeling |
| c. This information is picked | on how to lead a happier life |
| d. uses data from the person's face to | up by a web cam |
| e. the technology does all of this | to our dreary everyday lives |
| f. recreating personalized | on the daily train to the office |
| g. It may also have uses | the feelings on peoples' faces |
| h. give a patient advice | in other fields |
| i. provide a little more color | expressions |
| j. No more gray faces | art based on your mood |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

New computer art mirrors viewer's mood

Researchers in America and England have _____ software that scans the _____ on peoples' faces and then produces a _____ of computer-generated artwork. The technology is still very new. It analyses eight basic expressions, including the _____ and shape of the mouth, the openness of the eyes and the angle of the eyes. This information is _____ up by a web cam, which uses data from the person's face to guess how the viewer is feeling. The program automatically chooses colors and types of brush _____ each time the person's expression changes and paints a new picture of his or her _____. Lead researcher Dr. John Collomosse said the technology "does all of this in _____ time, meaning that as the viewer's emotions change the artwork [also changes]".

position
mood
feelings
strokes
developed
real
piece
picked

Collomosse said: "Once you have the programme and have [_____] it for the individual viewer, you are ready to start recreating personalized art _____ on your mood." The project is part of _____ research to develop different artwork tools for use in the computer graphics industry. It may also have uses in other _____. Analysts could use the software to find out more about the psychological _____ of patients. A trained doctor could look at the images and then give a patient _____ on how to lead a happier life or be more confident. The program may also provide a little more color to our _____ everyday lives - by placing uplifting artwork in front of us wherever we go. No more gray _____ on the daily train to the office.

ongoing
faces
based
state
dreary
adjusted
fields
advice

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

New computer art mirrors viewer's mood

Researchers in America and England have developed software _____ feelings on peoples' faces and then produces a piece of computer-generated artwork. The technology is still very new. _____ expressions, including the position and shape of the mouth, the openness of the eyes and the angle of the eyes. This information is _____ web cam, which uses data from the person's face to guess how the viewer is feeling. The program automatically chooses colors and types of brush strokes each time the person's expression changes and paints a new picture _____ mood. Lead researcher Dr. John Collomosse said the technology "does _____ time, meaning that as the viewer's emotions change the artwork [also changes]".

Collomosse said: "_____ the programme and have [adjusted] it for the individual viewer, you are ready to start recreating personalized art based on your mood." The project _____ research to develop different artwork tools for use in the computer graphics industry. It may also _____ fields. Analysts could use the software to find out more about the psychological state of patients. A trained doctor could look at the images and then give a patient _____ lead a happier life or be more confident. The program may also provide a little more color to our dreary everyday lives - by placing uplifting artwork in front of us _____.

No more gray faces on the daily train to the office.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'art' and 'work'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "COMPUTER ART" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about computers and art, and computers and feelings.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- scans
- basic
- angle
- brush
- lead
- real
- individual
- ongoing
- tools
- patient
- dreary
- gray

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What do you think of looking at art on a computer?
- c. Do you think computers can really understand our feelings?
- d. How much time would you spend each day looking at art on your computer?
- e. Do you think computer-generated art can make you feel better?
- f. Would you like all of the computers you pass each day to show art that makes you feel better?
- g. Does art in galleries change your mood?
- h. What kind of art do you like?
- i. What kind of art could be displayed on a computer that you don't normally see in galleries?
- j. Would you buy a software program that always displayed the exact kind of artwork you wanted to look at?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. What do you think of the idea of a computer-art doctor, whom you would visit when you feel bad?
- d. Do you think artwork created by computer graphic artists is real art?
- e. Would you worry about the kind of artwork a computer showed based on your mood?
- f. What do you think of the idea of printing the computer art and showing it to your friends each morning?
- g. Would you rather look at a piece of computer-generated artwork or a scene of beauty from nature?
- h. Do you think electronic art could be used to help people change their feelings?
- i. If you could look at the artwork that matches someone's feelings, whose computer-generated images would you like to see and why?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

COMPUTER ART: With your partner(s), analyze these images that have been created by a computer. What do the images mean? What is the person's mental state?

	Meaning	Mental state
<u>Person A</u> George W. Bush sitting on a giant red banana		
<u>Person B</u> Two cute puppy dogs trying to read an English newspaper		
<u>Person C</u> A toilet burning on top of Mount Everest		
<u>Person D</u> A golden beach covered with chocolate and strawberries		
<u>Other</u> _____ _____ _____		

Change partners and exchange your ideas. Decide on who has the best explanations.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information about the electronic artwork that reflects peoples' moods. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. POSTER: Make a poster advertising the benefits of new electronic art software that creates images to make you feel better. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson.

4. ART DIARY: Make a diary that includes artwork that reflects your feelings for one day. Show your diary to your classmates in the next lesson. Which diary did you like best and why?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F b. T c. T d. F e. T f. T g. T h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| a. scans | examines |
| b. angle | slant |
| c. picked up | detected |
| d. lead | head |
| e. emotions | feelings |
| f. adjusted | changed |
| g. ongoing | continuing |
| h. fields | areas |
| i. dreary | dull |
| j. uplifting | heartwarming |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| a. software that scans | the feelings on peoples' faces |
| b. It analyses eight basic | expressions |
| c. This information is picked | up by a web cam |
| d. uses data from the person's face to | guess how the viewer is feeling |
| e. the technology does all of this | in real time |
| f. recreating personalized | art based on your mood |
| g. It may also have uses | in other fields |
| h. give a patient advice | on how to lead a happier life |
| i. provide a little more color | to our dreary everyday lives |
| j. No more gray faces | on the daily train to the office |

GAP FILL:

New computer art mirrors viewer's mood

Researchers in America and England have **developed** software that scans the **feelings** on peoples' faces and then produces a **piece** of computer-generated artwork. The technology is still very new. It analyses eight basic expressions, including the **position** and shape of the mouth, the openness of the eyes and the angle of the eyes. This information is **picked** up by a web cam, which uses data from the person's face to guess how the viewer is feeling. The program automatically chooses colors and types of brush **strokes** each time the person's expression changes and paints a new picture of his or her **mood**. Lead researcher Dr. John Collomosse said the technology "does all of this in **real** time, meaning that as the viewer's emotions change the artwork [also changes]".

Collomosse said: "Once you have the programme and have [**adjusted**] it for the individual viewer, you are ready to start recreating personalized art **based** on your mood." The project is part of **ongoing** research to develop different artwork tools for use in the computer graphics industry. It may also have uses in other **fields**. Analysts could use the software to find out more about the psychological **state** of patients. A trained doctor could look at the images and then give a patient **advice** on how to lead a happier life or be more confident. The program may also provide a little more color to our **dreary** everyday lives - by placing uplifting artwork in front of us wherever we go. No more gray **faces** on the daily train to the office.